



Rockville Reports

MAY 2020 • VOL. 66 #5



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STOP THE SPREAD

To help stop the spread of COVID-19, you are required to wear face coverings on public transportation, in grocery stores and pharmacies, and in retail and food service establishments.



The City of Rockville: Continuity Amid COVID-19

City Extends Closures at Facilities, Maintains Services to the Community

City of Rockville facilities will remain closed to the public through Friday, May 15, in response to Gov. Larry Hogan's executive orders related to COVID-19 in Maryland.

City events, in-person classes, programs, rentals and activities are also canceled through May 15.

The announcement follows the state's recent announcement that schools will be closed through May 15.

Rockville employees are conducting as much of the city's operations as possible while maintaining recommended social distancing guidelines to ensure the health and safety of city staff and the community. Employees who are able are continuing to telework.

Essential city services will continue, including regular trash and recycling collection, water treatment, street repair, water and sewer system repair, virtual building code and fire inspections, utility- and public works-related permits and inspections, animal control, traffic signal repair, and police patrols and emergency response.

State and County Orders Require Face Coverings in Public

Face coverings are required if you're making a trip to a grocery store, pharmacy or retail store under a Montgomery County health order.

The order also requires that stores allow only a small number of customers inside at one time and that lines outside stores allow for social distancing between customers. Learn more at bit.ly/MocoMaskOrder.

A state order requires face coverings inside any retail or food service establishment, or when riding public transportation. Find the order at bit.ly/MaskExecOrder.

Need a Face Covering?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers easy instructions for creating face coverings out of cloth you have at home – including a bandana or a T-shirt. Find out how at bit.ly/CDCfacecover.

Following guidelines from the CDC, city employees who provide critical services — such as trash removal, water treatment and law enforcement — are required to cover their faces to

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Party at Home with Hometown Holidays Festing in Place

The COVID-19 emergency forced the cancellation of the Hometown Holidays Music Fest and Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade, but the city is determined to keep calm and party on by changing up the plan in order to safely carry on this Rockville tradition.

The revamped festival, dubbed Festing in Place, will allow the community to come together with music, food and video to mark Memorial Day on the City of Rockville Hometown Holidays Facebook page. Here's how to take part:

Concerts: Celebrate the Hometown Holidays Music Fest from the comfort of your home with performances from favorite HTH performers of years past posted



to Facebook throughout the May 23-24 weekend.

Hometown Music Mile: Walk or run a mile around your neighborhood or local park while listening to a curated Hometown Holidays Festing in Place playlist on Spotify, featuring bands from past festivals. Don't have Spotify? We'll post a list of bands on the Facebook page that you can use to create a lineup using your favorite music service.

We'd love to see you and your family join in. Take a photo or video and post it to Facebook using #HTHFestingInPlace or email *continued on pg. 3...*

Residents Sought for Service on Charter Review Commission

The Mayor and Council are seeking Rockville residents to serve on a Charter Review Commission that will review and recommend changes to Rockville's founding document — the charter. The charter, established in 1860 with Rockville's incorporation, is a legal document similar to a constitution that empowers the city to pass ordinances, in accordance with state laws. The document establishes the city's corporate limits and outlines how the city is organized and conducts business, such as the terms and number of elected officials, holding elections, levying taxes, adopting ordinances and providing services.

The commission, which will review specific provisions of the charter and recommend changes, will be comprised of 11 Rockville residents. The commission's work is proposed to begin this summer. It is anticipated that members will meet once or twice per month. Once convened, the commission will solicit resident input.

Interested applicants should submit a resume and expression of interest to the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations by 5 p.m. Monday, May 18. Find more information about the Charter Review Commission, including how to apply, at

www.rockvillemd.gov/102/Charter-Review-Commission.

Each member of the Mayor and Council will choose one commission member. In addition, the mayor will nominate a commission chair, to be approved by the council. The Mayor and Council together will select and approve five additional members. The chair of the city's Board of Supervisors of Elections will serve as a non-voting ex officio representative to the commission.

The Mayor and Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, June 1 to determine the scope of the commission's work.

The Mayor and Council last appointed a Charter Review in 2012. The commission made recommendations about the length of elected terms of the Mayor and Council, the number of members on the council, and the schedule by which Mayor and Council elections are held. The commission also identified several ways to enhance voting, including early voting and voting by mail. Find more information about the charter review process, including the charter at www.rockvillemd.gov/citycode.

For more information, contact 240-314-8280 or cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov.



Check Once, Check Twice

City Hall to Close, Recycling and Trash Collected One Day Later During the Memorial Day Holiday Week

Rockville City Hall and some city facilities will be closed Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day.

Recycling, trash and yard waste collection will be made one day later throughout the holiday week. Find more information at www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

News about impacts from actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 means some uncertainty for activities, programs and facility hours in the City of Rockville. Please check our online resources to see if any information contained in this edition of "Rockville Reports" has changed.

Parking will be free at city-owned meters on May 25.

For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov or call 240-314-5000. ✚

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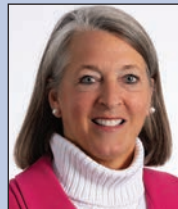
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Rockville, Maryland
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Mayor & Council

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Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton
240-314-8291
bnewton@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Monique Ashton
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Councilmember Beryl L. Feinberg
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Councilmember David Myles
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dmyles@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Mark Pierzchala
240-314-8292
mpierzchala@rockvillemd.gov



Meetings: Mondays, May 4 and 11 at 6 p.m. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter. Meetings are closed to in-person attendance and are livestreamed.

The May 11 meeting will be preceded by a drop-in session by telephone with Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton and Councilmember Mark Pierzchala from 5-5:45 p.m. To participate, sign up by 2 p.m. May 11 at www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil.

If you wish to submit comments in writing for community forum or public hearings, please email mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov by 2 p.m. on Mondays prior to meeting.

Share comments live during community forum. Sign up by calling the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations at 240-314-8280 by 9 a.m. the day of the meeting.

All comments will be acknowledged by the Mayor and Council at the meeting and added to the agenda for public viewing on the website. To practice responsible social distancing, Mayor and Council meetings will be conducted by teleconference and broadcast on Rockville 11, channel 11 on county cable, livestreamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11, and available a day after each meeting at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand.

Mayor and Council to Vote on FY 2021 Budget on May 11

The Mayor and Council are scheduled to vote Monday, May 11 on adoption of a city budget that responds to economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic while maintaining the same level of service to Rockville's residents.

The vote will follow a final work session on Monday, May 4. See the left column of this page for information about how to follow Mayor and Council meetings.

The proposed budget keeps the general fund at the same level as the current fiscal year. The \$84.6 million general fund supports the largest portion of the operating budget, and includes spending reductions considered by the Mayor and Council in response to the pandemic.

The city's current real property tax rate of \$0.292 per \$100 of assessed valuation would remain the same. All residential and commercial property owners pay this tax. Rockville has not increased its property tax rate in more than 25 years.

Water, sewer, stormwater management and recycling and trash service would also remain at their current rates.

The proposal would eliminate step or merit increases for all city employees but preserve a 1% cost-of-living adjustment for employees below the department head level. It would freeze hiring except for essential positions. Two new police officers would be the only new positions created.

City Manager Rob DiSpirito presented a \$144.2 million budget proposal in February that outlined the city's priorities for Fiscal Year 2021, which begins July 1. He proposed adjustments to the budget in April after the onset of the pandemic led to a state order shutting down most businesses.

Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/budget for more information. ❖

Looking Ahead with Vision Zero

Rockville's plan for meeting a goal of zero traffic-related deaths or serious injuries is moving ahead, with the Mayor and Council scheduled to hear a presentation on the city's Vision Zero action plan on Monday, May 4.

The plan includes steps to create safer streets through policies promoting improved design, traffic law enforcement and education. While there are ongoing city efforts in these areas, the plan lays out a coordinated and systematic approach to explore ways of reaching the goal.

The Mayor and Council are scheduled to vote on plan adoption in June, with the city putting the plan in place beginning in July.

The 25-page plan includes:

- An explanation of Vision Zero, including how the Vision Zero approach to safe mobility differs from the traditional approach to traffic and pedestrian safety.

proach to traffic and pedestrian safety.

- Background on Vision Zero efforts in the city, county and globally.
- An explanation of how the plan will ensure fairness and equity.
- A brief crash data analysis and an explanation of how further data analysis will help create a systematic approach to providing safe mobility citywide.
- Descriptions of engineering, enforcement, education and policy actions to take toward achieving Vision Zero.
- An explanation of how the plan will be implemented to ensure transparency and accountability to meet Vision Zero goals.

For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/visionzero or find the May 4 Mayor and Council meeting agenda at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter. ❖

Live Mayor and Council Meeting Updates on COVID-19



Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton

Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton will deliver an update before each Mayor and Council meeting, and the meeting itself will include an update by Mark Landahl, Rockville's emergency manager, on the city's COVID-19 response.

The meeting will be conducted by teleconference and be broadcast live on Rockville 11 and via

livestreaming at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11, and will be available on demand beginning Tuesday at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand.

Comments for community forum will be accepted in writing. Email mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov by 2 p.m. Monday to submit comments.

Find Newton's updates at www.youtube.com/cityofrockville. ❖

Make a Difference: Give to the Rockville Emergency Assistance Program

The COVID-19 crisis is unprecedented in how it is affecting your neighbors through financial hardship.

If you have the means, and would like to partner with the City of Rockville to help your neighbors in need, consider donating to the Rockville

Emergency Assistance Program (REAP). One-hundred percent of donated funds go to help Rockville families.

To donate, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/registration and search for "REAP" in the filter field. ❖

RVs and Trailers Approved for At-home Quarantine

Rockville residents will be allowed to temporarily use recreational vehicles or trailers at their homes, if needed, to quarantine in place during the COVID-19 emergency.

The Mayor and Council approved the temporary measure at their Monday, April 20 meeting. Using an RV or trailer will require written permission from the city.

Requirements for permission include only one RV or trailer per

lot, parked on a paved area, an operational water and electricity supply, and inspection for compliance.

Those using the trailer or RV must be permanent residents of the residences on the lots where the vehicle is in use. Use is permitted only on properties zoned for single-family-detached residential use. RVs and trailers must be registered and display an up-to-date vehicle tag.

The city-issued approval lasts

for 30 days, with an extension for an additional 30 days with demonstrated cause.

The ordinance allowing use of the vehicles for quarantine will automatically expire 90 days from the April 20 adoption.

For more information, contact code-enforcement@rockvillemd.gov or call 240-314-8330. Find instructions and a fillable PDF application form at bit.ly/RVquarantine. ❖

IMPORTANT NUMBERS: Main: 240-314-5000

Police Non-emergency: 240-314-8900

24-Hour Utility Emergency Report Hotline: 240-314-8567



STAY INFORMED: The Mayor and Council meeting schedule and agendas can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil. Staff reports with background information are included with the agendas, which are posted several days before each meeting.

Get Involved with the City

- **Send an email** to mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov.
- **Testify at a hearing** or in writing to cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov or by mail to the City Clerk's Office, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- **Volunteer** to be on a board or commission. Find ways to give of your time and talents at www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer.

Boards and Commissions

Anyone interested in serving on a board or commission may write to: Mayor and Council, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, call 240-314-8280, or fill out and submit an expression of interest form at www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions.

While some meetings are canceled, other boards and commissions meetings will take place virtually in May. See times and dates, and ways to participate at city's online calendar: www.rockvillemd.gov.

- **May 13, 27 Planning Comm.** 7 p.m. (Both may be held by teleconference. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter for details closer to the meeting dates.)

Vacancies

The Mayor and Council are seeking applicants for the following boards and commissions:

- Board of Supervisors of Elections (1)
- Historic District Comm. (3 reg./1 alt.)
- Human Rights Comm. (1)
- Human Services Advisory Commission (1)
- Landlord-Tenant Affairs Comm. (1 tenant alt.)
- Senior Citizens Comm. (2)
- Traffic and Transportation Comm. (1)

For more, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions or call 240-314-8280.

Connect with us on Social Media.



LEARN MORE ON ROCKVILLE 11

www.youtube.com/cityofrockville

► SPEAK UP ◀

Report potential fraud, waste and abuse related to City of Rockville government services and employees.

Call 1-866-921-6714

Email rockvillemd@integritycounts.ca
Visit www.integritycounts.ca/org/rockvillemd
For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/fraud-waste-abuse.

COVID-19 Roundup

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protect the health of the community members they serve, as well as their health, and the health of their coworkers.

Properly Dispose of Gloves and Masks

Personal protective equipment is an important part of staying safe, but please dispose of gloves and masks appropriately — meaning in the nearest trash can. The community has become concerned about an increase in PPE-related litter. Keeping our neighborhoods and parks clean is part of keeping our community safe.

Mayor and Council Meetings

The Mayor and Council continue to conduct meetings by teleconference. Meetings include a presentation about Rockville's response to the COVID-19 emergency by the city's emergency manager. They are broadcast live on Rockville 11 and via live-streaming at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11, and are available on demand at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand a day after each meeting.

Comments for community forum will be accepted in writing. Email mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov by 2 p.m. on the day of the meeting to submit comments.

Find the Mayor and Council agenda at www.rockvillemd.gov/Agenda Center. *Learn more on page 2.*

Festing in Place

continued from pg. 1...

it to FestinPlace@rockvillemd.gov. Photos and videos will be featured on Facebook.

Taste of Rockville: Enjoy the Taste of Rockville, organized by the Rockville Chamber of Commerce and Community Reach of Montgomery County. Rockville restaurants will offer Memorial Day weekend specials. Support local businesses by ordering carryout, curbside pickup and delivery.

Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade: Rockville's commemoration of Memorial Day spans 75 years. This year, we're asking the community to keep the spirit alive by



Parks Open, Amenities Closed, Rec Programs Available Online

While Rockville's parks and trails remain open, amenities in the parks are closed, including playgrounds; bathrooms; fitness stations; tennis, pickleball, basketball, Bankshot and volleyball courts; the skate park at the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center; and athletic fields for group play. The Rockville Dog Park at King Farm is also closed.

The Department of Recreation and Parks has extended its cancellation of in-person programming, including classes, programs and activities, through spring, and is exploring options for summer programming, should the COVID-19 emergency continue.

Customers will receive a full refund of any program fees paid. (Please allow two weeks for processing.) For questions, contact the Recreation and Parks Department at registration@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8620, Monday-Friday, from

8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

To keep community members well and active, Rockville is offering select virtual programs that can be done in the safety of home. Find them at bit.ly/VirtualRecClasses.

Events Canceled: Equipment Show, Hometown Holidays, Suds and Soles

Event cancellations include the annual Department of Public Works Equipment Show, the Suds and Soles 5K and the Hometown Holidays Music Fest and Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade. *See the article on page 1 for information about how the city plans to safely carry on Rockville's Memorial Day weekend tradition.*

An executive order issued by Gov. Hogan prohibits gatherings of more than 10 people, reducing public contact in an effort to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The order applies to social, cultural and community gatherings.

Joint Statement from Elected Officials of the National Capital Region

Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton joined elected officials from suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia in releasing a joint statement on the COVID-19 pandemic after the governors of Maryland and Virginia and the mayor of the District of Columbia issued stay-at-home orders March 30.

"As the chief elected officials of 21 local governments in the National Capital Region, we are joining in one voice to implore each of the more than five-and-a-half million individuals in our region to stay home unless you are performing an essential activity as permitted by authorities," the statement

said. "This is the most important thing each of us can do to stop the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the threat to our most vulnerable neighbors, including older individuals and those with chronic health conditions."

Read the full statement at bit.ly/COVID-19jtStatement033120.

Executive Order on MPIA Requests

Due to the COVID-19 emergency, and pursuant to an order from the governor, the City of Rockville has issued an executive order suspending the timeframe required by state law to respond to Maryland Public Information Act requests.

Rockville staff will continue to monitor and respond to requests to the best of their ability.

Read the order at www.rockvillemd.gov/mpia.

No Need to Get Pushy: Crosswalks Signals are Automated

Traffic signal technicians from the city's Department of Public Works installed signs on pedestrian push buttons in April asking pedestrians to wait for automated signals, rather than push the button. The push button is still exposed to help the visual and hearing impaired feel the button vibrate when they are allowed to cross. Those who need it can still push the button to get the vibration and the special sound indicating the right time to cross. Wash your hands often. All those who can, please follow instructions on the signs.

Stay Informed

For the latest city-related information, follow the City of Rockville on social media (Nextdoor, Facebook and Twitter), visit the website at www.rockvillemd.gov, or sign up for Alert Rockville at www.rockvillemd.gov/alerts.

The city has created an email newsletter to keep community members up-to-date on COVID-19 news, including city, state and county news; Rockville closures and cancellations; resources on how to help in the community; and safe and fun activity ideas for families to do at home. Visit mailchi.mp/rockvillemd/covid19updates to sign up and receive the newsletter daily in your inbox.

For general inquiries about city operations, call 240-314-5000. ❄

Rockville on the Hunt for Artists

Rockville is looking for professional artists for two major projects — one to beautify the recently renovated Rockville Swim and Fitness Center; the other for a gateway art project on a highly visible site near Thomas Farm Community Center.

The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center recently celebrated completion of a lobby and locker room renovation, and artists are invited to submit proposals that engage and welcome visitors and members to the renovated building in a fun and unforgettable manner.

The site of artwork for the gateway project is the hilltop at the corner of Route 28 and Falls Grove Drive, and a section of the Carl Henn Millennium Trail that runs parallel to Route 28.

The all-inclusive budget for the gateway art project is \$250,000, and \$100,000 for the project at the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center.

The budgets cover design work, engineering, fabrication, delivery, site preparation, lighting, installation of the work at the site, as well as other associated expenses, such as travel and artist's fee.

The deadline for both projects' submissions is midnight, Friday, May 29.

Details about these nationwide calls for artists, with requirements for submissions, can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/AIPP. For more information, contact arts programs supervisor Betty Wisda at 240-314-8681 or bwisda@rockvillemd.gov.

Multimedia Competition Entry Deadline Extended

A little extra time at home could be rewarding for Rockville high school students with a creative take on human rights.

The city's Human Rights Commission has extended the deadline for entries for its Multimedia Scholarship Competition through Friday, May 29.

Formerly known as the Multimedia Contest, the revamped annual program is an opportunity for students who live in and/or attend high school in Rockville to compete for tuition and/or book scholarships by responding to one of two prompts focused on human rights.

The prompts, applications and additional information can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/humanrights.

Students may choose their desired medium, e.g., an essay, poem, song, painting, or other medium, through which to respond to the prompts. Submissions will be judged by a panel comprised of high school faculty, community leaders and HRC members. Judging will be based on creativity, work quality and relevance.

First-, second-, and third-place winners will be announced at a Mayor and Council meeting and will be awarded up to \$2,500 in scholarships.

Extra Trash and Recycling?

We know more time at home can mean more trash and recyclables. But there's no need for an extra trash cart.

If you have more bags of trash than usual, place them next to your cart by 6 a.m. on your collection day and city crews will collect them. If you have extra recyclables, please don't put them in plastic bags, which could get tangled in recycling equipment. Instead, place them in any 32-gallon can with handles and we will pick them up.

Learn more about Rockville's recycling and trash collection, including what can and can't be recycled, at www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash, call 240-314-8568, or email recyclingrefuse@rockvillemd.gov.



TOILETS AREN'T TRASH CANS ... Rockville has a flushing problem. Increasing amounts of unflushable trash is clogging city sewer lines — and can clog pipes in your home, creating a costly mess. The "unflushables" include items you might not think of: Did you know "flushable" wipes really aren't? Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/dontflushtrash to learn more about what to flush, what not to, and what happens when unflushables get flushed. Warning: It's gross.

SIGN UP FOR WEEKLY NEWS!
Go to:
www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters

Bamboo to the Zoo

Bullards Park Project Provides for Pandas

Removal of an invasive species as part of the city's stream restoration at Bullards Park in Rockville's West End comes with a side benefit — or in this case, an entree.

Along with stabilizing the stream, a tributary to Watts Branch and part of the Potomac River watershed, contractors will remove a grove of bamboo at the park's entrance.

The bamboo, which damaged sanitary sewer and forced repairs in 2014, is difficult to contain and costly to remove. It's also a favorite food of several animal species at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C.

In looking for disposal options for the bamboo, city staff contacted the zoo's Department of Nutrition Science, which works to identify potential sources of bamboo to feed the zoo's animals. With zoo staff tasked with harvesting bamboo twice a week in order to keep up with animals' dietary needs, bamboo identified at other city sites could provide a future feast.

Bamboo is often planted as a privacy barrier. But as it spreads, bamboo destroys soil, killing surrounding trees and shrubs, and threatening native plant health and biodiversity. For more information, visit mda.maryland.gov and search "bamboo."

To learn more about the Bullards Park stream restoration, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/bullardsstreamproject.



How to Donate to Help Seniors in Need

Can't make it to the Rockville Senior Center's Tuesday and Wednesday food and personal essentials drives? Donations can also be dropped in the large blue bin at the side of the Rockville Senior Center, 9 a.m.-noon, Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

The Tuesday and Wednesday collections are 9 a.m.-3 p.m. drive-up-and-drop-offs at the senior center, 1150 Carnation Drive, where senior center staff unload items without donors having to leave their cars.

Requested items include pasta, sauce, vegetables, tuna, soup, cereal, oatmeal, rice, beans, cereal bars, granola bars and snacks; and small-size personal care items such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, lotion, toilet paper and homemade masks.

Thanks to the community's generosity, more than 1,000 meals and 560 bags of shelf-stable food have been bagged and distributed since March 18. The senior center also received donations of 150 masks, and a \$1,000 donation from Rockville Seniors, Inc., to the Senior Center's Program Assistance Fund.

You, too, can help by making a donation to the Program Assistance Fund, which can be used to purchase food and personal hygiene items for seniors with emergency needs. Visit bit.ly/SrAssistance to donate, or send checks, made out to the City of Rockville, c/o Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive with "Program Assistance Fund" in the memo line.

For more information, contact the Rockville Senior Center at 240-314-8800, from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, or email seniorcenter@rockvillemd.gov.



Questions, Concerns or Ideas?

Reach out to Rockville City Manager Rob DiSpirito at rdispirito@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8102.

Planning Commission Reschedules Public Hearing Dates for Neighborhood-based Planning Areas of Draft Comprehensive Plan

Rockville's Planning Commission has set new public hearing dates of Sept. 9 and 23 for the community to provide comments on the initial staff draft of the neighborhood-specific sections of the comprehensive plan update.

The original May dates were rescheduled due to a gubernatorial executive order that prevents gatherings of 10 or more to slow the spread of COVID-19, and to allow neighborhood and civic groups greater time to review and discuss the draft among their organizations before providing their testimony to the Planning Commission.

Written comments continue to be accepted leading up to and just after the September hearings. Planning staff is available by request via email or virtual meeting to answer questions and talk with community associations, residents, businesses, workers and other organizations, so that community members can learn more about the draft's contents and how to provide feedback.

The second component of Rockville's comprehensive plan update, "Volume II: Planning Areas," was delivered in December to the

Planning Commission for its review. Volume II consists of policy recommendations and recommended city projects for each of Rockville's geographic neighborhood-specific planning areas.

These recommendations build on citywide policies of the draft "Volume I: Elements" — which the Planning Commission reviewed over the past year — by focusing on issues and opportunities unique to each planning area.

The Planning Areas section will guide neighborhood, or planning area, policies and projects throughout the next two decades. This section will be combined with the first half of the draft comprehensive plan.

Rockville's comprehensive plan sets a vision and goals for the future of the city, with practical policies and actions to achieve those goals.

For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040 or contact principal planner Clark Larson at clarson@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8225. 🍀



Bike Rack Grants Available for Businesses

Bicycle parking means business. Studies show that businesses with bicycle parking near their storefront get a measurable sales boost.

Business owners without bicycle parking near their shop or office could qualify for a rack — provided and installed for free by the City of Rockville — under the city's Bike Rack Grant Program. Learn more about the program

and find an application by visiting www.rockvillemd.gov/bicycling and selecting "Bicycle Parking."

Residents interested in seeing bicycle parking at specific locations can direct business owners to the website. For more information, contact Rockville's bicycle and pedestrian coordinator, Alyssa Roff, at 240-314-8527 or bikeways@rockvillemd.gov. 🍀

Biking Safely During COVID-19 Emergency

While there is a stay-at-home order in place, bicycle rides can still be one way of getting outdoors for exercise. With Rockville recognizing each May as Bike Month, cycling, when done appropriately, is a great way to enjoy the spring weather and shake up your social distancing routine. Here are some helpful tips about keeping safe while cycling during the COVID-19 emergency:

- **Make safety your No. 1 priority.** Riding safely and not ending up in the hospital conserves medical resources for fighting the pandemic. Do your part. Avoid risky riding behavior and play it safe.
- **Be aware of your "respiratory signature."** While you're walking or standing, air expelled by breathing, coughing or laughing can travel about 6 feet and hang in the air. This is your respiratory signature. Because you are moving on a bicycle, respiratory signatures are much longer than if you were standing still. Instead of a sphere around you, it's more stretched out,



like a comet. It trails behind you, where people can ride through it.

- **Maintain social distance.** Avoid group rides or riding with someone who is not in the direct group of people you are social distancing with, such as family or roommates.
- **Ditch the crowds.** Avoid areas that may be crowded with cyclists and pedestrians, such as popular bike lanes or shared-use paths. With shared-use paths, there is often not enough room to pass people with more than 6 feet between you.
- **Follow the rules.** While streets are less crowded with vehicle traffic, you should still follow the best practices for urban riding. Be aware, be seen and be predictable.

Find a map of the city's bicycle routes at bit.ly/RkvBikeMap. 🍀



When we participate in the Census, we invest in the health of our future and the future of our health.

The #2020Census will inform local jurisdictions where new hospitals should be built, and directly impact the funding for healthcare and food assistance programs across Montgomery County and the state.

#2020Census
#EveryoneCountsMCMC

www.rockvillemd.gov/RockvilleCounts

United States Census 2020
Connect with us @census2020



Get Into It

City Manager: Rob DiSpirito
Deputy City Manager: Jennifer Kimball
Director of Communication: Marylou Berg
Public Information Specialists: Cliff Cumber, Sean Sedam

Web and Digital Manager: Tatum B. Walker
Graphics and Printing: Eric Ferrell, Erin Fincher, Lori Russler
Rockville II: Hagop Balekjian, Craig Buchanan, Kathy Dantzler

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DON'T BLAME IT ON THE RAIN, MAKE IT DRAIN ... Springtime showers can leave homeowners with unwelcome stormwater pooling in their yards. The city's Environmental Management Division offers tips to help solve the problem. "Slow it. Spread it. Sink it!" a new guide to sustainable home drainage, which can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/drainageguide, offers practical and eco-friendly techniques for capturing rainfall and controlling stormwater runoff that will help protect your property and the environment.